



The President's Daily Brief

October 6, 1975

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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USSR

The 1975 Soviet grain crop may be 5 to 15 million tons less than our earlier estimate of 170 million tons. Indications of widespread use of unripened grain for forage purposes, abandonment of other low yielding acreage, and lower than expected yields in European Russia lead us to revise sharply downward our earlier estimate.

With the harvest rapidly coming to an end, it now appears that, out of a total sown acreage of 325 million acres, 30 to 40 million acres will not be harvested as mature grain. The loss of pastures and forage crops, because of drought, apparently led to livestock grazing or cutting of immature grain for green feed. The wide range in our revised estimate of 155 to 165 million tons reflects uncertainty as to the amount this acreage would have yielded had the grain been allowed to mature.

So far, the Soviets have purchased about 20 million tons of foreign grain. A crop of 160 million tons--the mean of our revised estimate--will leave the USSR still roughly 32 million tons below requirements for this fiscal year, even allowing for stock drawdowns to a minimal level. The Soviets cannot hope to purchase that much additional grain and are taking drastic steps to cope with the expected shortfall. Official data on meat production and livestock inventories in August confirm that distress slaughtering has begun. Meat production was 11 percent higher than a year ago and inventories of hogs, sheep, and poultry had dropped. Above average slaughter of hogs--heavy consumers of feed grains--has led to reduction in numbers by 3 million head, 6 percent below last year. Further large-scale slaughter is likely.

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LEBANON

Beirut is quiet, but sporadic fighting occurred in the Tripoli-Zagharta area in the north over the weekend. Zuhayr Muhsin, leader of the Syrian-controlled Saiqa fedayeen organization, reportedly has gone to Tripoli in an effort to stop the fighting. The terrorist attack at the Beirut airport Saturday apparently was unrelated to Lebanon's internal problems.

The removal of barricades in Christian and Muslim sections of Beirut is proceeding, and only a few thoroughfares remain blocked. Traffic is nearing normal levels, and businesses are reopening.

Despite the lull in political activity because of the four-day Muslim holiday, members of opposing sides are generally pessimistic. [REDACTED]

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The terrorist attack on Beirut airport appears to have been the work of fedayeen fringe elements who hoped to force Egypt to renounce the Sinai disengagement agreement. No fedayeen organization has claimed the terrorists. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] The Palestine Liberation Organization, which captured one of the gunmen, has denounced the incident.

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PORTUGAL

Prime Minister Azevedo has intensified his campaign to restore military discipline, but continues to be challenged by leftist-oriented units.

The government apparently decided that the transfer of disruptive soldiers would provide at least a short-term solution to growing indiscipline. These moves are being contested by radical troops who have now banded together in several new organizations. The soldiers' groups are allied with extreme left-wing political parties and probably receive encouragement from the Communists, who officially continue to support the Azevedo government.

Last weekend, an army transport training unit in Porto was disbanded after enlisted men voted to resist the transfer of two leftist officers and several enlisted men. Some of these soldiers later issued a statement warning that the struggle has not ended. They were immediately supported by a coalition of six parties of the far left, known as the Revolutionary United Front, which called for mass action to protest the unit's dissolution.

Radicals prevented the transfer of more than 40 soldiers--who had been accused of participating in anti-government demonstrations--from Beja air base in southern Portugal. Despite the government's decision to send loyal paratroops to break up several hundred leftists gathered outside the base, the transfer orders were revoked and the soldiers will be allowed to participate in non-partisan political demonstrations.



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Prime Minister Azevedo has blamed the far left for the breakdown in military discipline. He has told the press that divisions in the ranks are preventing the government from exercising complete control over the Lisbon area.

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Lack of cooperation by General Carvalho, who commands the internal security forces and the Lisbon military region, also contributes to the government's inability to tighten control over the military.

President Costa Gomes, who returned to Portugal yesterday from official visits to Poland and the USSR, may oppose Azevedo's policy of attempting to deal decisively with defiant troops. Costa Gomes is famous for his willingness to compromise and has weakened anti-Communist forces in the past by trying to avoid confrontations.

In a speech yesterday to mark the founding of the first Portuguese republic in 1910, Costa Gomes emphasized the need to heal divisions among the people and the armed forces, but he also deplored actions that "prejudice the exercise of authority." Socialist leader Soares later was attacked by a crowd of radical leftists, but was rescued by armed naval police.

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ARAB STATES

Syrian President Asad has rejected a second effort [] to reconcile his differences with Egypt. []

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[] A week earlier Asad had refused a unilateral [] plea for reconciliation.

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Asad [] would refrain from personal attacks on President Sadat but would continue to criticize the disengagement agreement because he believes it is "treasonous." He flatly refused to meet Sadat.

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[] Asad had promised [] to stop personal attacks on the Egyptian President. Direct criticism of Sadat, however, has continued to be featured daily in Syrian media.

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INDIA-BANGLADESH

Following are key points from an interagency memorandum on the implications of the Indian emergency and the coup in Bangladesh.

The military-led coup in Bangladesh, unlike Gandhi's crackdown on her domestic opponents, has had a considerable impact on South Asian regional and international relationships. The new government in Dacca is seeking to strengthen Bangladesh's relations with Pakistan and China. This introduces new uncertainties into Dacca's relationships with New Delhi and Moscow, although the new leaders in Bangladesh, fearing possible Indian intervention, have asserted to a doubtful India that they want to retain close ties.

The situation in Bangladesh is fragile, and India, already concerned about the turn of events in Dacca, may be laying the groundwork for the option of fomenting dissidence and turmoil or a pro-Indian coup in Bangladesh. Although there are numerous constraints on New Delhi, there is a significant risk of Indian military intervention within the next year in Bangladesh.* A breakdown of domestic order in Bangladesh which caused a flood of refugees into India would probably lead to a coup or Indian military intervention.

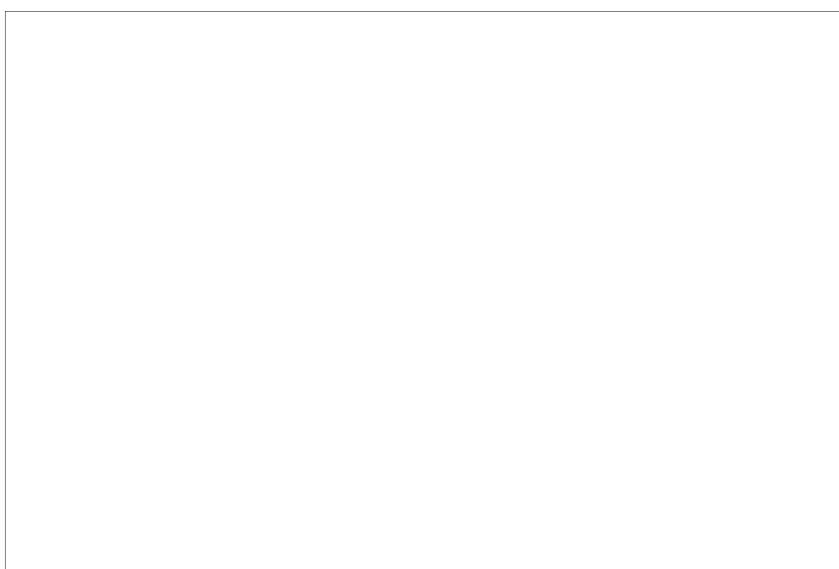
Indian intervention would be strongly condemned by China and Pakistan, and both might well engage in sabre-rattling near India's borders.

Although the odds are against it, in such a situation India and Pakistan could become embroiled in hostilities, leading to a serious international crisis.

**The Bureau of Intelligence and Research of the Department of State believes that there is a significant risk of a coup, perhaps aided by India, within the next year, but that direct Indian military intervention is much less likely. The chances for such intervention would increase dramatically if a coup failed and if refugees continued to stream into India.*

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